

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9 are amended and new claim 10 is added; thus, the pending claims 1-10 remain for reconsideration, which is respectfully requested.

No new matter has been added and accordingly, entry and approval of the amended claims is respectfully requested.

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-10 are pending.

Claims 1-9 are rejected.

ITEMS 1-2: REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 7, 8 AND 9 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(e) AS BEING ANTICIPATED BY DODD, U.S. PATENT PUBLICATION NO. 2003/0036978, HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS "DODD."

Independent claims 1, 7, 8 and 9 are allegedly anticipated by Dodd.

In accordance with the foregoing, claim 1 is amended to recite, in part, "extracting each record from the answer file and reading a salesperson file containing shop ID numbers corresponding to salesperson ID numbers of the salespersons and a shop file containing respective attributes corresponding to the shop ID numbers to increment each of total counts for one or more attribute groups each having an attribute matched with an attribute corresponding to a corresponding one of the salesperson ID numbers for the extracted record; and transmitting each of results of the total counts for said one or more attribute groups to a corresponding one of the salesperson terminals for a salesperson ID number corresponding to a shop ID number having the matched attribute corresponding to one of said one or more attribute groups, the salesperson ID number being obtained by reading of the salesperson file and the shop file." Support for the claims amendments can be found, for example, in FIGS. 7 and 11-16 and in the specification at page 9, line 25 to page 12, line 30, page 13, line 20 to page 16, line 29 and page 17, line 3 to page 21, line 30.

The Office Action relies upon Dodd at paragraphs 6 and 9 to disclose the claimed embodiments. Dodd at paragraph 6 recites:

The present invention relates to methods and systems for providing customized information to customers. In one aspect, the invention may comprise a method. Such a method may include a

step of providing an interface to a plurality of customers. The method may further comprise a step of receiving customer identification information from at least one of such customers. This step may be accomplished through the use of the interface. The method may also include a step of receiving an indication of purchase interest in at least one consumer product from at least one of the customers. In this step, the consumer product is selected the customer from a plurality of consumer products available for sale. Additionally, the identity of the plurality of consumer products is made known to the customers through the use of the interface. The method may also comprise a step of accessing customer information related to the customer from a preexisting database. The method may also comprise a step of providing to the customer product information regarding said at least one consumer product. Such information is provided through the use of the interface and the product information provided is customized on the basis of the customer information accessed in accessing step.

In other words, Dodd discusses a method and a system for providing customized information to customers.

Furthermore, Dodd at paragraph 9 recites:

In another aspect, the present invention may comprise a system. A system of the present invention may comprise a customer interface. The customer interface may be provided through the use of machine readable instructions resident on a machine readable format. The system may also comprise a customer information database. This database may comprise information contained in a machine readable format. The customer information database may also contains customer information records pertaining to each of a plurality of customers. Each of the customer information records may be associated with each of the customers for access by the system. The system may also comprise a product information database. This database may comprise information contained in a machine readable format. The product information database may contain product information records pertaining to each of a plurality of products. Each of the product information record may be associated with each of the products for access by the system. The system may also comprise one or more customization algorithms. These algorithms may be contained in a machine readable format. At least one of the algorithms may contain instructions sufficient to associate information contained in one or more of the customer information records with information contained in one or more of the product information records.

In other words, Dodd discusses a system for associating information contained in a customer record with information contained in a product information record.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that Dodd fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, the claimed "extracting each record from the answer file and reading a salesperson file containing shop ID numbers corresponding to salesperson ID numbers of the salespersons and a shop file containing respective attributes corresponding to the shop ID numbers to increment each of total counts for one or more attribute groups each having an attribute matched with an attribute corresponding to a corresponding one of the salesperson ID numbers for the extracted record; and transmitting each of results of the total counts for said one or more attribute groups to a corresponding one of the salesperson terminals for a salesperson ID number corresponding to a shop ID number having the matched attribute corresponding to one of said one or more attribute groups, the salesperson ID number being obtained by reading of the salesperson file and the shop file."

Sales strategy or sales know-how generally is varied depending on the specialty of the respective shops. One benefit of the embodiment according to claim 1 is that it is possible to provide each salesperson with information concerning an optimal selling method (success case) for the salesperson by analyzing the product selling method based on the salesperson's attributes, the shop locations, and the customer properties.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that a prima facie case of anticipation cannot be based upon Dodd, because Dodd fails to disclose each and every feature in the embodiment of claim 1.

Independent claim 7 is directed to a sales support data providing apparatus, including:

- a transmitter transmitting an answer request to salesperson terminals, the answer request requesting each terminal to input an answer choice to a selling method contained in the request;

- a receiver receiving answer data from the terminals, the answer data of each terminal containing a salesperson ID number and an answer choice input by one of salespersons for the selling method;

- a storage storing the respective answer data corresponding to the salespersons cumulatively as an answer file, the answer file containing records which correspond to the salesperson ID numbers and answer data of the salespersons respectively;

- an extractor extracting each record from the answer file and reading a salesperson file containing shop ID numbers corresponding to salesperson ID numbers of the salespersons and a shop file containing respective attributes corresponding to the shop ID numbers to increment each of total counts for one or more attribute groups each having an attribute matched with an attribute corresponding to a corresponding one of the salesperson ID numbers for the extracted record; and

a transmitter transmitting each of results of the total counts for said one or more attribute groups to a corresponding one of the salesperson terminals for a salesperson ID number corresponding to a shop ID number having the matched attribute corresponding to one of said one or more attribute groups, the salesperson ID number being obtained by reading of the salesperson file and the shop file.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 7 patentably distinguishes over the cited prior art.

Independent claim 8 is directed to a computer-readable storage medium executing a sales support information providing method, including:

transmitting an answer request to salesperson terminals, the answer request requesting each terminal to input an answer choice to a selling method contained in the request;

receiving answer data from the terminals, the answer data of each terminal containing a salesperson ID number and an answer choice input by one of salespersons for the selling method;

storing the respective answer data corresponding to the salespersons cumulatively as an answer file, the answer file containing records which correspond to the salesperson ID numbers and answer data of the salespersons respectively;

extracting each record from the answer file and reading a salesperson file containing shop ID numbers corresponding to salesperson ID numbers of the salespersons and a shop file containing respective attributes corresponding to the shop ID numbers to increment each of total counts for one or more attribute groups each having an attribute matched with an attribute corresponding to a corresponding one of the salesperson ID numbers for the extracted record; and

transmitting each of results of the total counts for said one or more attribute groups to a corresponding one of the salesperson terminals for a salesperson ID number corresponding to a shop ID number having the matched attribute corresponding to one of said one or more attribute groups, the salesperson ID number being obtained by reading of the salesperson file and the shop file.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 8 patentably distinguishes over the cited prior art.

Independent claim 9 is directed to a sales support data providing apparatus, including:

means for transmitting an answer request to salesperson terminals, the answer request requesting each terminal to input an answer choice to a selling method contained in the request;

means for receiving answer data from the terminals, the

answer data of each terminal containing a salesperson ID number and an answer choice input by one of salespersons for the selling method;

means for storing the respective answer data corresponding to the salespersons cumulatively as an answer file, the answer file containing records which correspond to the salesperson ID numbers and answer data of the salespersons respectively;

means for extracting each record from the answer file and reading a salesperson file containing shop ID numbers corresponding to salesperson ID numbers of the salespersons and a shop file containing respective attributes corresponding to the shop ID numbers to increment each of total counts for one or more attribute groups each having an attribute matched with an attribute corresponding to a corresponding one of the salesperson ID numbers for the extracted record; and

means for transmitting each of results of the total counts for said one or more attribute groups to a corresponding one of the salesperson terminals for a salesperson ID number corresponding to a shop ID number having the matched attribute corresponding to one of said one or more attribute groups, the salesperson ID number being obtained by reading of the salesperson file and the shop file.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 9 patentably distinguishes over the cited prior art.

ITEMS 3-4: REJECTION OF CLAIMS 2, 3 AND 4 UNDER 35 U.S.C §103(a) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER DODD IN VIEW OF LU ET AL., U.S. PATENT NO. 5,331,544, HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS "LU."

Dependent claims recite patentably distinguishing features of their own or are at least patentably distinguishing due to their dependence from the independent claims. Withdrawal of the rejection of pending claims and allowance of pending claims is respectfully requested.

ITEM 5: REJECTION OF CLAIM 5 UNDER 35 U.S.C §103(a) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER DODD IN VIEW OF JOHNSON, U.S. PATENT NO. 6,067,525, HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS "JOHNSON."

Dependent claims recite patentably distinguishing features of their own or are at least patentably distinguishing due to their dependence from the independent claims. Withdrawal of the rejection of pending claims and allowance of pending claims is respectfully requested.

ITEM 6: REJECTION OF CLAIM 6 UNDER 35 U.S.C §103(a) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER DODD IN VIEW OF JOHNSON, IN FURTHER VIEW OF CAROL B. MACKNIGHT,

**TEACHING CRITICAL THINKING THROUGH ONLINE DISCUSSIONS, HEREINAFTER
REFERRED TO AS "MACKNIGHT."**

Dependent claims recite patentably distinguishing features of their own or are at least patentably distinguishing due to their dependence from the independent claims. Withdrawal of the rejection of pending claims and allowance of pending claims is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIM:

New claim 10 is directed to a sales support information providing method, including:

extracting sales records for a product, including a shop ID
and attributes of a shop corresponding to said shop ID, and
incrementing, for each extracted sales record, a count for a
plurality of attribute groups each having an attribute matching an
attribute corresponding to a shop ID corresponding to a requesting
salesperson; and
transmitting results of the extracting and incrementing to a
terminal of the requesting salesperson.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 10 patentably distinguishes over the cited references.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.


Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 7, 2007

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